seeds of prickly palmettos. They pile these in a mortar, boil them in water from time to time, and press them as stated above. Others spin cotton, which occupation they resume at night by the fire. They also take care of the sick, and for that they apply themselves to learning the medicinal plants which are good for the illnesses. They have some excellent remedies which are very effective. We will someday know more about them, if it pleases God. Nevertheless, neither the men nor the women wear themselves out with work.

CHAPTER IX

Their Drinking Parties

We will not call them feasts because they only hold their debaucheries to drink and to get drunk, both the men and women. They just call them ouicou, which is the drink that they make from cassava, as strong as they can for these occasions. They hold them nearly every day in various places for various reasons. The most famous drinking party is for war. They hold one when the man and woman have their first male child. They likewise celebrate when they cut off all the hair of their children for the first time. Also when their boys are growing up and attain their adolescence they make them fast, and then hold a celebration. The young men in question capture a Mansfénix or merlin or some other bird of prey and feed it for some time preceding the celebration. Then, everybody being assembled, the father of the young man takes the bird and kills it on the head of his son, and having crushed and ground the body of the bird, puts it into water. Then, after slashing the body of his son with agouti teeth or something else until the blood comes, he bathes and rubs him with this water. Afterwards they make the young man lie very straight in a bed which is hung from the top of the hut, and he must maintain this posture, or else (they imagine) he will become deformed. If he should bend over, he would remain bent, if he should bend a leg, the leg would always remain bent. They also make him fast for too long a time. Next, they dry the heart and feet of the bird and hang them around his neck. For some, who are stronger, they mix a great deal of pimento with the water of which we spoke, and make them eat the bird's heart, and imagine that that will make the boys valiant.

757 [164] them, and all the above mentioned remedies heal without steam baths or mercury. Conversely, small pox which is very rare among them is very dangerous in the same way that the plague is for us in France. [478]

751 755 They believe that pains in the joints such as gout are caused by the boyes of South America and their gods. [426] They use a light-colored green stone as a remedy for kidney stones, to help women give birth, and for epilepsy. The women hang them around their neck like one of the most precious of their jewels. They receive them from the men who bring them from South America. There are also 757 imitation green stones which have no value. [445] The riboúlichi [204] is a true rush if one of its roots is crushed and absorbed in some liquor by a woman in childbirth; it makes the delivery easy, but if too much is taken the child will be harmed as has been actually seen. [439]

[164] Ophthalmia is a common disease among the Caribs which appears almost every year, and is spread in the islands inhabited by the Caribs. It causes a fair number among them to be one-eyed. During the first five or six years this evil did not seem to approach the French, but now it makes its violence felt too often. [397] The Caribs purge themselves only when they are extremely sick. However, they only eat crabs, Lambis, bugaus, and some other poor nourishment which causes many boils. They pierce some boils with a ray's tail and squeeze the others to empty them. If the pus is such that it will not come out they take a hair which they dip into it and empty it. [340]

757 The chibouleléme is a common weed which the Caribs boil in water. 278 They then use the broth to relieve themselves from constipation. [147] The Caribs shred the skin of the palm Christi and make a compress for the forehead as a remedy for headache. They heat the leaf and rub the afflicted part with it and receive relief. [25] Balium is a herb with a stench used as remedy against fever. [171]

752 When the Caribs rid themselves of chiggers they make a small cut with a fish bone or a sharp little splinter and press them between their nails and make them leave. They also use shark oil or porpoise oil to make them leave or urucu mixed with oil of couàheu. [148]

757 [207] Herbs which cure the wounds made by poison arrows are called toulàla. [475] To cure arrow wounds they use a palma Christi leaf which they warm on the fire and rub on the wound. According to Captain Baron one of his hosts had been hit in the heel by a poisoned

785 while others more robust satisfy themselves for nine or ten days with a bit of bread and water. If they did not hold to this rigorous abstinence they would be considered weaklings. They are also superstitious in their avoidance of salt, pig meat, tortoises, manatees, fat, eggs and a large number of animals which would have been considered unclean according to the law of Moses. They also have a custom of marrying female first cousins; cousins of the sons of two brothers call themselves brothers. They have no names and they ordinarily call a man the son of so and so, as the Jews are accustomed to do. This has given rise to the opinion that they were descended from Jews, but no reasons are provided by them which might indicate that they practice all of these customs for religious reasons, so that it is not worth while to infer any consequences from this fact.

775 773 They believe in the immortality of the soul, but say that each man has three souls; one in the heart, one in the head, and another in the arm. The soul in the heart manifests itself by its throbbing and goes straight to heaven upon death to be very happy there. The souls in the arm and head manifest themselves by the beating of the pulse and throb of the arteries. They become maboyas, that is to say, evil spirits, which they believe to be the cause of everything sinister and disastrous.

Concerning Birth, Education and Marriage, of the Caribs

680 Since nature was corrupted by the wickedness of our first parents, it has been absolutely necessary to have laws to enlighten reason and to direct it without error to the correct path of truth. It should not astonish us if the birth, life, and customs of our unenlightened Caribs are filled with superstition, errors, and nonsense which brings amusement at the same time that it brings tears to the eyes of those who have true Christian sentiments.

● 844 Among their nonsense which upset me the most was a superstition practised by men at the birth of their children. Women give birth with little pain, and if labor is difficult for some of them they know how to relieve it using a special root as a remedy and which has an

844 admirable effect for this purpose. I have talked about it in the section on plants, chapter one, paragraph four. The women do not have the trouble which is so fashionable among the women of Europe, for the baby is no sooner born than it is washed and put into a small cotton
846 hammock. The woman then takes up her housework as if nothing had happened. Rather it is as if the birth pangs had passed from the woman to her husband, for he begins to complain. Everyone consoles him and a hammock is hung inside from the roof of the house for him and he is visited as if he were sick. He is put on a diet which would cure gout and the great pox of the stoutest men of France. For myself I am astonished at how they can fast so long without dying, for they sometimes spend the first five days without drinking or eating anything. Afterwards, up to the tenth day they drink ouicou, which provides about the same nourishment as beer. When these ten days are over they start to eat cassava and they drink ouicou, but they abstain from everything else for an entire month. During this time they only eat the inside of the cassava so that the remainder resembles the edge of a shapeless hat. They keep the crusts which they hang from a string in the house and this cassava is saved for the day of the banquet, which takes place at the end of forty days.

After the forty days have passed they invite their relatives and best friends. Upon their arrival but before they start to eat, they gash the skin of the poor unfortunate man with agouti teeth and draw blood from every part of his body, so that with a man who is sick only in imagination they oftentimes cause a genuine sickness. But if I may use this metaphor it is now necessary to add sauce to the fish. This is to say they take sixty to eighty big grains of pimento or India pepper, the strongest that they are able to find, and after having mashed it thoroughly in water they take this spiced water and wash the wounds and scabs. I believe the poor man suffers no less than if he had been burned alive. However, he is not supposed to utter a single word, for if he did it would be considered cowardly and shameful. When this ceremony is over he is brought back to his hammock where he continues to stay for several days. The others go and have a good dinner and enjoy themselves in the carbet at his expense. But this is not all, for over the space of six full months he does not eat any birds or fish, firmly believing that this would harm the

5: Rouse E-4 (no date) 1948 ST13 Callinago ST13 (1650-1700)

LIFE CYCLE

Birth and childhood.—Sexual intercourse was forbidden during pregnancy. The birth often took place by a fire. If it caused trouble, the woman drank juice made from a certain root. Afterward she washed the child in a stream and placed it in a tiny hammock or on a couch of leaves. If the birth had taken place at night, the men of the house bathed themselves so that the child would not catch cold.

For several days after birth the mother fasted, eating only dried cassava and drinking warm water. The father, on the other hand, practiced the couvade. Immediately after the birth he complained of pains, went to a separate hut, and lay in a hammock. He remained there for at least 40 days after the birth of his first child, and for 4 or 5 days after the birth of other children. During this time he went out only at night and avoided meeting anyone for fear that they might tempt him to break his fast, thereby making the mother sick and the child cowardly. At first he took no food. After 5 days he was permitted to drink corn beer and after 10 days to eat manioc bread in increasing quantities. He ate only the insides of the bread, the crusts being hung up in the hut until the end of the 40-day period, when they served as the basis for a feast in the village carbet. Preceding the feast the father was brought into the carbet, was stood on two large flat cakes of cassava, and was scarified by two men chosen by the carbet chief. A mixture of urucú, pepper seeds, and tobacco juice was rubbed into the cuts, and the blood which fell from them was daubed on the face of the child so that he would have the courage shown by the father in undergoing scarification. The man was then fed the two cassava cakes upon which he had stood and also fish, which he had to spit out. He went back to bed for several days and had to abstain from the flesh of animals for a period of 6 months or a year, lest the child become deformed.[7]

The child received its first name 12 or 15 days after birth from a friend of the father who acted as godfather or godmother. The name was taken from that of an ancestor, from nature, or from something that had happened during birth, pregnancy, or the couvade. If the baby were strong enough to bear it, his ears, nose, and lips were pierced at the same time, but this might be deferred until 2 years had passed, when the child's hair was cut.

At first all children ate with the mother; when 4 or 5 years old the boys began to eat in the men's house. The fathers spent much time in training their sons in hunting, fishing, swimming, singing, basketry, making canoes, and particularly in shooting the bow and arrow, at which they had

[7] The accounts of the couvade vary considerably from source to source. The above version is taken largely from Davies (1666, pp. 336–338), with supplemental data from La Borde (1886, pp. 249–250).

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

It is not usual for husband and wife to spend the whole night together—each retires to sleep on a separate couch or mat.

Rochefort mentions the fact that the Island Carib of his day never touched a pregnant woman. This is still true, be the woman his own wife or another.

I have heard a married woman protest that she was not normally pregnant, but that a piaï had put a tête-chien (dog-headed Dominica constrictor) in her belly. On the other hand, legend reports this snake as having had connections with women in the old days.

Parturition is accomplished in a squatting or sitting posture (in the old days by straddling a hammock split lengthwise down the middle), and with the assistance of some old sage-femme, whose manipulations and remedies are of very doubtful benefit to the patient. After giving birth, the Carib woman remains confined to the house for 40 days; i. e., until her "retour de couches."

Suckling by the mother is general, and often of long duration. I came across a little boy of about 4 years, who, after helping his elder sister to carry up water from the river, used to claim and obtain refreshment from his mother's "tote-totes" (breasts; children's speech, possibly from Carib "totaka," to support). In the all-too-frequent event of a woman dying in childbirth, the maternal aunt or even the grandmother will suckle the infant. I was told that any woman who once has borne, irrespective of age, may induce lactation by the use of certain herbs, some applied locally, others taken internally. I was unable to learn their names, with two exceptions: the ripe fruit of the corossol (*Anona muricata*) and a berry they call kurupùm (*Renealmia exaltata* (?)). Whatever the cause, I myself witnessed the case of a woman whose youngest child was a grown man, giving the breast with apparent success to her niece's newborn baby.

Clever as the Carib woman would seem to be in inducing the rise of her milk, so her attempts to get rid of it appear clumsy to us. When the time for weaning has come, her usual procedure is to milk herself onto a fire stone, or, better still, into the nest hole of a species of large black ant, known locally as fourmis mordantes.

The naming of infants has, nowadays, become confused with Christian baptism, though the baptismal name itself is rarely, if ever, used in after life, its place being taken by another, chosen concurrently. Despite the priest's protests, baptism is delayed until at least one month after birth—that is, until the septa of the cranium have joined. The choice of names falls to the godparents—to the godfather in the case of a boy; to the godmother in the case of a girl. Carib names, such as Wàkanik, Màruka, Cimanàri, are known to have been used as recently as 20 years ago, but no living example remains. The nonbaptismal name now takes their place. Most families bear surnames, or, as they call them, "titles"—relics, in all

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946
ST13 Callinago ST13

591 (1) Father; mother; married daughter, her husband and their children; two
592 unmarried daughters, both with children; one unmarried son.
Three other married daughters have separate establishments in the immediate vicinity, as does one married son. Another married son lives with his wife's family some miles away, and one married daughter lives with her husband's people.

(2) Widowed mother; married daughter, her husband, and their children; widowed son; grandson (the latter is the son of another married daughter who has a separate neighboring establishment).
The widowed son's children live with their maternal grandmother.

(3) Father; mother; mother's pre-marital married daughter with her pre-marital son and her husband; mother's pre-marital son; unmarried daughter and her children; son; small son; small daughter.

586 Legal divorce is unknown to these Caribs, though they apply the word "divorce" to any separation between couples married legally or otherwise, of which there are several examples. In one case the wife left her husband because of ill-treatment; in another the husband abandoned his wife and fled to Guadeloupe (where he remarried) because he was in trouble with the English law; while yet another husband "divorced" because he could not get on with his wife's mother. Separation on grounds of sexual infidelity is very rare—chiefly because such a reason is considered too trivial to break up the union. Widows and widowers are free to remarry as and when they please.

585 Newly married couples as such are subject to no special restrictions, nor is
[606] there any formal avoidance of parents-in-law. Customs and beliefs affecting
[846] behavior at the menstrual period, during pregnancy, and after childbirth have been discussed in another paper.[7] In as far as the latter concern the father as well as the mother, they show vestiges of the couvade.

847 As illegitimate children and their parents are in no way stigmatized, abortion
● 844 is rare and generally condemned (although on account of changing economic conditions it appears to be now on the increase). Parturition takes place in a
[827] crouching position, usually with the aid of the parturient's mother or of some old sage-femme, who employs massage and various herbal teas or potions (such as a draught of a boy's urine) if she considers it necessary to hasten labor. When she has cut and bound the navel cord, and bathed the child, the sage-femme (or
[304] maternal grandmother) takes the infant on her lap, and inserts a finger under

7 Douglas Taylor, *Carib Folk-Beliefs and Customs from Dominica, B. W. I.* (Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, vol. 1, pp. 507-530, 1945), p. 519.

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946
ST13 Callinago ST13

its tongue "to break the thread" (?) so that it may the sooner learn to speak. Then she stretches the limbs, pinches the nose, and "gives the head a nice shape" by pressing the forehead with her thumb-pads upward and backward from the supraorbital ridges toward the crown. This proceeding is continued by massaging the forehead, using a circular and upward motion of the palm of the hand. No measures are taken today to maintain the head-shape thus given, and "only old-timers bother to make a child look nice, nowadays." A bulbous or protruding forehead is considered ugly.

The accouchée has to submit to a strict regime for forty days, but the newborn child is suckled in what to us is a haphazard way, given arrowroot or *Canna* starch and herbal teas from the start, and handled by all members of the household.

The baby-name given to the child at birth is today that by which it is registered; while the "true" name, chosen by the sponsor of like sex, is that now given in baptism. This rite, at which the parents do not assist, usually takes place a month or so after birth, and is followed by either a feast or dance or both. Godparents are chosen rather for their social or economic status than for any spiritual qualities. The relationship is, however, taken very seriously, and parents and godparents address one another as "compère" and "commère." The ears of female infants are pierced and a thread passed through the hole in order to keep it open until such time as rings are acquired.

Apart from the baby-name and patronymic (baptismal names are, at least among older Caribs, not easily divulged) modern Caribs are supposed to have surnames, which they call titres *titles*. But these are infrequently and irregularly employed, and usually consist of the given name of a grandfather or greatgrandfather. Brothers sometimes bear different "titles"! Illegitimate children take their father's name (as patronymic) and "title."

As soon as they learn to walk, Carib children follow their mothers or big sisters to the river morning and evening, and so acquire early a taste for bathing and the habit of carrying little calabashes of water or other loads more in play than in earnest. Soon their fathers or big brothers make for them tiny carry-alls (shoulder-baskets), traps, fishing rods, etc., so that play and work merge into one another. One of the few non-utilitarian amusements—for some grown-ups as well as for children—is to "run the waves" (courir lames), a local variety of surf-riding which Breton also recorded. When available, the "tote" of a canoe—a plank seat about 9 inches wide by 2½ to 3 ft long—is used; but with a favorable surf, very good "rides" may be had without it, merely by stiffening the body and using the outstretched hands as a rudder.

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946
ST13 Callinago ST13

601 cy les nomment ainsi que dessus, comme leurs Peres" (100). Presuming that the "uncles" and "aunts" are those whom they and their fathers call akátobu (86) and nahīpuli (88), these "nephews" are (men's) ss s s and (women's) br s s (when these are not d s?). These terms should be compared to 52 and 34 respectively.

Paternal and maternal sides were apparently merged in the grandchild-grandparent generation. Ob íbali (97), the usual term for gr ch Breton says: "Petit enfant, petits enfans. Tous les arrières fils sont ainsi nommez par les grand-pères, et grande-mères." The word itself appears to mean *offspring, progeny, increase.* Although men and women had different terms for gr f and gr m, their meanings appear to have corresponded pretty closely. Nor do the latter indicate any differentiation in affiliation. Grandfather was -támuru or -támuku to the men, -árguti to the women (93 and 94). The former appears to be related to atámura *to capture,* támǫ *captive,* atábura *to enclose (or) close under;* the latter may be compared to árgeta or árgīta *to hunt, take, capture.* With the women's term for grandmother, -agete (96), compare ágeta *to nourish, suckle;* whence also two other terms, yege (m sp) and nilígini (w sp) *my grandchild* or *animal that I have reared* (98). The men's term for gr m, ínuti (95) and its plurals, ináwtinų, k-inoyę are more obscure. They appear to be related however to ʔíharu *woman,* ʔínoyų *women* (4) and perhaps ultimately to ʔíhuti *raised, exalted;* ʔíhoni *that which is on high;* š-inuta-e *to put out from, to leave;* inúbali *gift;* with the significance *out (or) forth from (her).* These two pairs of terms probably reflect the structure of the matrilineal joint family in which the grandfather was hunter and fisher, the grandmother the provider of other sustenance.

[603] Among the present day Carib in Dominica, a woman usually has more to do with the upbringing of her daughter's child than its own mother, and is in consequence often called da or dada *nurse* by it instead of gą̄gan *grandmother.* I have even known a woman to suckle her daughter's child! On the other hand, [844] probably because (until the law forbade it quite recently) women usually delivered their own daughters, a child calls the sage-femme who put it into the world gą̄gan. These last two terms are, of course, Creole.

Among the remaining terms, perhaps the most interesting are those for *(formal) friend* and *joking friend* (50 to 54). Breton gives i-bawánale (50) and ini-buynáliku (51) (m sp), and ni-tíñao (53) (w sp) *mon ami, mon compère* for the former relationship, of which he says:

Ce mot de compère est en usage en toutes les Isles où il y a des Sauvages, tant parmi les François, lors qu'ils traittent avec leurs amis Sauvages, que parmy les Sauvages

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

The acid fruit of this species is edible and refreshing but is apparently only known and used locally by Carib hunters.

Specimen citation: 3357.

Pitcairnia gracilis Mez in DeCandolle, Monogr. Phan. 9: 407. 1896.

Batard La Pite.

A Lesser Antillean species found in Dominica on rocky semi-wooded spots at lower to middle elevations.

The fine, fluffy, white scales which cover the lower surfaces of the grass-like leaves are mixed with honey and used by the Carib as a remedy for the common infant's mouth disease called «thrush». The same mixture is employed at birth as a healing agent on the cut umbilical cord. The plant itself is carried when travelling as a good luck «chance».

Specimen citation: 1240, 3054, 3496.

Pitcairnia spicata (Lamarck) Mez var. **sulphurea** (Andrews) Mez in DeCandolle, Monogr. Phan. 9: 393. 1896.

Pitcairnia sulphurea Andrews Bot. Repos. 4 (1802) pl. 249.

Batard La Pite.

A species of basaltic outcrops at the summits of mountain peaks of Dominica and St. Vincent.

The leaves of this species are also utilised by the Caribs in the manner discussed under *Pitcairnia gracilis*.

Specimen citation: 319, 1950.

LILIACEAE. Lily Family.

Smilax guianensis Vitman, Summ. Plant. 3: 422. 1791.

Smilax macrophylla Willdenow, Sp. Pl. ed. 4, 2: 786. 1806.

Bamboche.

A strong vine of the Lesser Antilles.

Caribs employ the withe-like stems in the making of snares, while an infusion of the roots in cold water is believed to be a cure for gonorrhoea.

Specimen citation: 3269.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

PHYTOLACCACEAE. Pokeweed Family.

X 834 **Petiveria alliacea** Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 342. 1753.

Kudjuruk. — *énerudiuma, lenáru.*

A widespread weedy plant found in Florida, the West Indies, and continental tropical America. Although common in Dominica especially at lower elevations, this species is cultivated by the Caribs chiefly near their houses.

[788] The Indians consider kudjuruk to be both a charm and a medicine. The plant is used, together with honteuse (*Mimosa pudica*) and sou marqué (*Cassia bicapsularis*) as an ingredient in [751] a ritual bath taken at the time of the new moon. It is also rubbed on the body as a protection against evil spells. Prepared as « tea » [278 it is considered an antidote to poisoning, as well as an aid to 447] women in parturition. For further uses of kudjuruk in ritual baths see *Ipomoea pes-caprae* and *Ocimum micranthum*.

Specimen citation: 38C (T), 3194.

Phytolacca rivinoides Kunth & Bouché, Ind. Sem. Hort. Berol. 15. 1848.

Pokeweed. — Z'Oreilles Mulâtre. — *tarîkai* (« her/its »).

This pokeweed is to be found in continental tropical America as well as throughout the West Indies. In Dominica it is a familiar species in woodlands, clearings, and abandoned gardens chiefly at middle elevations.

[262 The young leaves are often boiled by the Carib as an edible 278] green, which is also said to be « good » for dropsy.

Specimen citation: 26 (T), 1160.

Rivina humilis Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 121. 1753.

Rivina laevis Linnaeus, Mant. 1 41. (1767).

Demoiselle.

An herb of tropical America, frequent on waste land and fields in Dominica.

[278] Caribs make a medicinal « tea » from demoiselle.

Specimen citation: 3376.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

fish from biting by causing their mouths to become soft. Corossol leaves are also boiled alone to produce a tea drunk by those with colds and fever, or by women in labour (parturition); the leaves are also used for bathing (adults or children).

Specimen citation: 398.

Annona reticulata Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 537. 1753.

Custard Apple, Bullock's Heart. — Cachima, Cachima Coeur de Boeuf. — *alabálisa* (m), *kasíma*.

This is another common West Indian species, varieties of which produce edible fruits.

The bark is employed by the Caribs to bandage sprains and dislocations; when so used it is kept moist with salt water. A tea is brewed from cachima leaves, together with the leaves of the pigeon pea [*Cajanus cajan* (L.) Millsp.], and this is drunk by individuals suffering from fever.

Specimen citation: 3358.

Annona squamosa Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 537. 1753.

Sweetsop, Sugar Apple. — Pomme Canelle. — *kalíkiri*.

Like the preceding species this small West Indian tree is widely cultivated for its edible fruit.

The leaves are made into a «tea», drunk as a supposed cure for a painful spleen (a common complaint among Caribs).

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

Guatteria caribaea Urban, Symb. Ant. 4: 240. 1905.

Guatteria curupou Griesebach, Fl. Br. W. I. 7, 1859, *non* Dunal.

Cananga caribaea Britton in Br. & Wils. Bot. P. R. (Sci. Surv. Puerto Rico & Virg. Isls. 5). 311. 1924.

Mabo (often spelled mahot, mahoe, or mahaut) Noir, Bois Violon.

A medium-sized forest tree found in Puerto Rico and recorded in the Lesser Antilles from Guadeloupe to Grenada.

Bois violon possesses a good wood often made by the Caribs into boards. Young specimens of this species are also fashioned into masts for dugouts. The strong bark furnishes a rope fiber from which are constructed the halyards, etc., for sails. Such

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

 824X

Periwinkle. — **Caca Poule.** — *kákuti, wálukuti.*

An ornamental, widely planted and often naturalized in tropical regions.

A tea made from the leaves of caca poule is used by Caribs to treat diabetes and is also used to combat primary inertia in childbirth. [278 844]

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

Tabernaemontana citrifolia Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 210. 1753.
Bois Lait.

A small tree of Jamaica and the Lesser Antilles and found commonly in Dominica at lower elevations.

The brittle twigs of bois lait contain an acrid milky juice which is used by the Carib to allay pain in an aching tooth. [278 752]

Specimen citation: 3160, 3223.

ASCLEPIADACEAE. Milkweed Family.

Asclepias curassavica Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 215. 1753.
Red Milkweed.

A common weedy plant of fields and waste grounds in southeastern United States, the West Indies, and tropical continental America.

The Caribs consider the root of this plant to be a good febrifuge. [278]

Specimen citation: 3212.

CONVOLVULACEAE. Bindweed Family.

Ipomoea batatas (Linnaeus) Lamarck, Encycl. 6: 14. 1804.
Sweet Potato, Patate. — *mábi*[49], *ule* (generic name for edible roots or tubers).

Sweet potatoes are cultivated throughout warm temperate and tropical regions for their edible roots. Although this species is of

---

[49] Chanca (69) records this Carib name as *subi*; apparently the words *mábi* and *ule* were used of any tuberous food. The Taino equivalent was « age ». Lovén (37) considers « ages » to be true yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) but he is possibly mistaken for most of the edible species of this genus are plants of the Old World tropics introduced very early into the Antilles.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

A woody vine common in the American tropics and found in Dominica at lower elevations.

Flowers of branda, together with those of *Petrea kohautiana*, are brewed by the Caribs into a tea used as an abortive.

Specimen citation: 683, 692.

Erithalis fruticosa Linnaeus, Syst. ed. 10. 930. 1759.

Black Torch. — Bois Chandelle, Bois Flambeau. — *túli* (« torch »; cf. Tupi *turi*).

This shrubby tree is widely distributed in the Caribbean region, being found in southern Florida, the West Indies, and Central America. In Dominica bois chandelle grows commonly in the low scrubby thickets of the windward coast.

The extremely hard, durable, wood is used by the Island Caribs for piles and posts and indeed wherever a timber is needed for contact with the ground. An inflammable resin is located in the wood which is split and bound into torches. These torches, about three to four feet long and three to four inches in diameter, burn rapidly and last for approximately two hours. The soot of burnt *túli* wood was formerly used by the Caribs as a substitute for burnt gommier (*Dacryodes excelsa*) gum.

Specimen citation: 15 (T), 684, 3291.

Exostemma sanctae-luciae (Kentish) J. Britten, Journ. of Bot. 53: 138. 1915.

Exostemma floribundum Roemer & Schultes, Syst. 5: 19. 1819. Quina. — *uíduako*.

This species ranges through the Lesser Antilles.

From the bark of quina Caribs make a concentrated decoction which is employed chiefly as an emetic and purgative. When combined with the pounded leaves of marigold (*Wedelia trilobata*) and immortel (*Erythrina corallodendron* var. *bicolor* Krukoff) the decoction is also given to women to induce expulsion of the placenta after childbirth. Canoe paddles are fashioned from the wood.

Specimen citation: 139 (T).

Genipa americana Linnaeus, Syst. Nat. ed. 10. 931. 1759. Genip. — *dlarúkai* (m), *sáwa* (w).